

## Montana FSA Reorganization Plan

### Meagher County Profile

#### 1) Proposed Consolidation

It is proposed that the Meagher County Office at White Sulphur Springs, Montana be closed and the workload and staff consolidated into the Broadwater County Office in Townsend, Montana.

#### 2) General Description of County

Meagher County is a small one-person shared management office in White Sulphur Springs with approximately 55 active FSA clients. Meagher is a medium sized county in south central Montana with 87 percent of the county devoted to pasture and woodlands and less than 14% in crop production. The county is fairly remote and White Sulphur Springs is a significant trade center for the area. Meagher ranks 40<sup>th</sup> in small grains production in the state and 25<sup>th</sup> in livestock production. Meagher had 57 DCP and 21 CRP contracts in 2005.

#### 2) County Statistics

- Number of producers 81                      Percent of State .3%
- Producer Payments \$1,423,965              Percent of State .4%
- Number of employees 1

(Note: Number of Producers and payments derived from 2005 CCC-1099 data)

- Cost to benefits ratio .083

(Note: This represents the administrative cost in dollars to deliver one dollars worth of benefits in the county office)

#### 3) Destination County: Broadwater County (Townsend)

- White Sulphur Springs is 42 miles from the Broadwater County (Townsend) FSA office
- Workload - Due to the distances from other FSA county offices it is anticipated the majority of the producers will travel to the Townsend Office for FSA programs
- Employees – there is one employee assigned to the White Sulphur Springs office. That employee will be reassigned to the Broadwater County office.

#### 4) Makeup of Receiving County

The receiving office (Townsend, Broadwater County), upon implementation of the plan will be composed of one 3-5 member Area Committee, one County Executive Director and 4 Program Technicians. Lewis & Clark County (Helena) is also part of this proposed consolidation

#### 5) Travel impact on producers

- Included is a map of the proposed combination to include Meagher, Lewis & Clark and Broadwater Counties. The map shows the approximate number and locations of producers in Meagher and Lewis & Clark Counties. Producer numbers on this

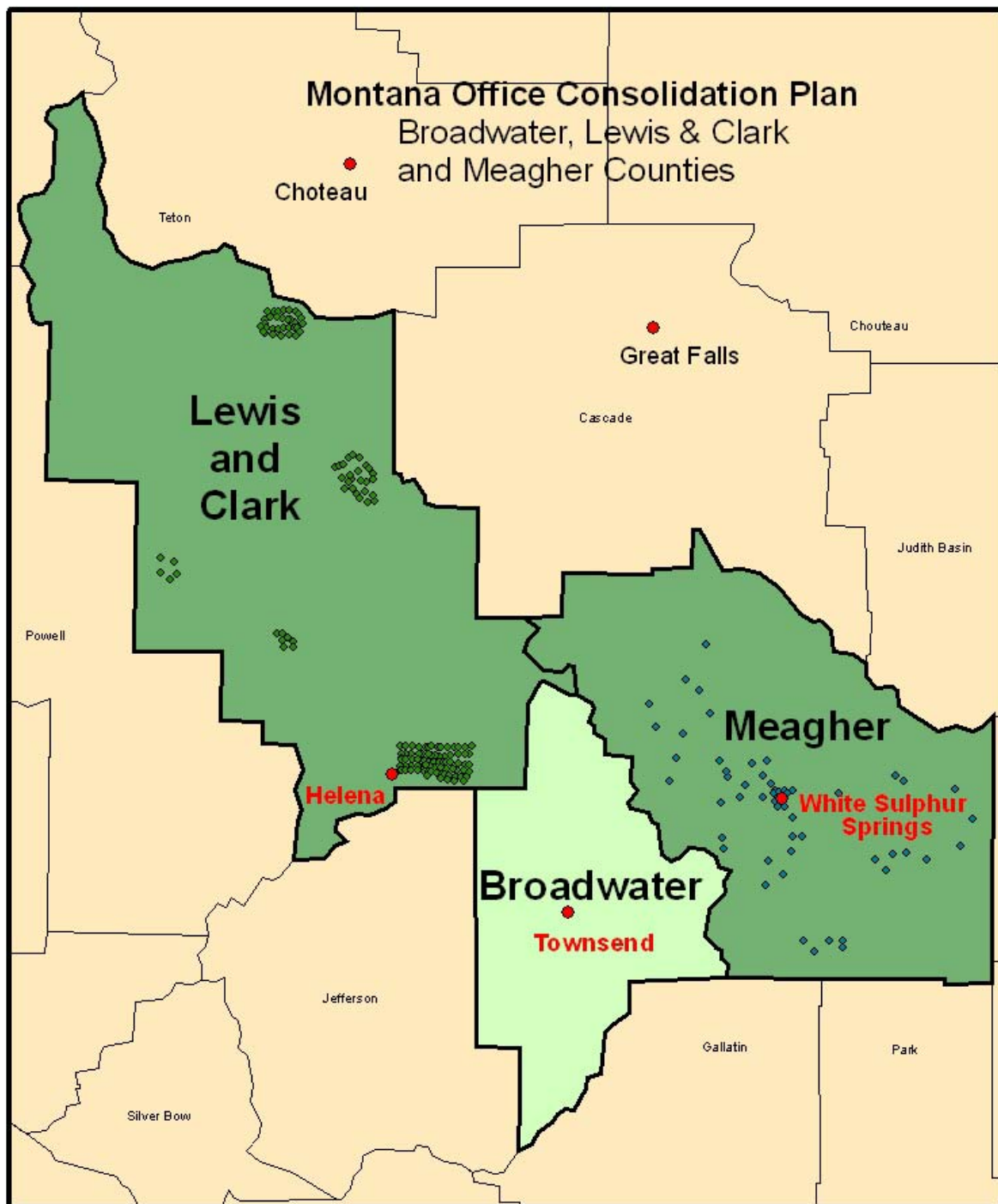
map may be different than the producer numbers above, due to using 2001-2006 as the base years for this figure. This will include all producers visiting the office, and would also include EQIP and disaster applications. FSA no longer has responsibility for EQIP.

- The Broadwater office is 42 miles from the Meagher office. Of the 50 to 60 active producers in Meagher, approximately 50% residing North of White Sulphur Springs would have to drive an additional 42 miles to the consolidated office in Broadwater. The remaining 50% would have increased mileage significantly less than 42 miles depending up whether they chose to do business in Wheatland, Gallatin, or Broadwater Counties.

6) Specialized Service Needs/Outreach

An integral part of the Montana FSA Reorganization Plan is to streamline or change business practices focused at requiring less visits, on the part of the producer, to the county office to do business with FSA. These changes will be implemented in all counties within the state with the intent to make participation for all producers easier and more efficient. In addition to those initiatives, FSA will reach out to communities where the closure of an office burdens producers with excessive distances to travel to the nearest FSA office. This outreach effort may include, sign-up meetings where the producer will be able to signup with an FSA official in the producer's own community, informational meeting in the outlying communities, office days in the outlying communities during implementation of the plan, or 1-800 numbers installed in the FSA office.

One of the focuses of the public meetings to be held will be to solicit ideas from producers how FSA can best meet their needs on an ongoing basis.



Map Created on February 21, 2007 .